

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original) A self tightening, ankle brace, comprising combination,

a) strap structure including first and second elongated strap portions, said structure defining a through slit,

b) said first portion adapted to be wrapped about an ankle,

c) said second portion adapted to extend through the slit, then downwardly at one side of the ankle, then underfoot, and then upwardly at the opposite side of the ankle, for operative attachment and said first portion.

Claim 2 (original) The combination of claim 1 wherein said structure forms a unitary strap incorporating said first and second portions.

Claim 3 (original) The combination of claim 1 wherein the second portion is folded relative to the first portion, proximate the slit.

Claim 4 (original) The combination of claim 3 wherein the slit extends at an angle  $\alpha$  relative to the strap first portion direction of elongation, where

$$40^{\circ} < \alpha < 50^{\circ}.$$

Claim 5 (original) The combination of claim 1 including stiffener means on the strap portion proximate the slit.

Claim 6 (original) The combination of claim 1 including an adjustable hook and pile connection defining said attachment.

Claim 7 (original) The method of establishing a self tightening ankle brace in operative position which includes

a) providing strap structure including first and second elongated strap portions, said structure defining a through slit,

b) wrapping the strap first portion about a leg just above or proximate the malleolus,

c) passing said strap second portion through the slit and then downwardly at one side of the ankle, then

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underfoot, and then upwardly at the opposite side of the ankle, in operative attachment with said first portion.

Claim 8 (original) The method of claim 7 including operatively attaching the strap second portion to the strap first portion via hook and pin elements to tighten the strap second portion under foot.

Claim 9 (original) The method of claim 7 including allowing the strap second portion to self adjustingly slide endwise in said slit, in response to ankle flexing, assisting tightening of the strap structure.

Claim 10 (original) The method of claim 7 including forming said slit to extend at an angle  $\alpha$  relative to the strap first portion direction of elongation, where

$$40^{\circ} < \alpha < 50^{\circ}.$$

Claim 11 (original) The method of claim 7 including folding the strap structure to cause the strap second portion to extend downwardly through the slit.

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Claim 12 (new) A self tightening, ankle brace,  
comprising in combination,

a) means including strap structure, having  
multiple elongated strap portions, said structure defining a  
through opening,

b) one strap portion adapted to be wrapped and  
tightened about an ankle, via tightening of strap extent  
passing through said opening,

c) there being strap extent passing downwardly  
at one side of the ankle, then underfoot, and then upwardly  
at the opposite side of the ankle, for operative attachment  
to said one portion.